

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE REFUTATION OF THE ZANĀDIQA AND THE JAHMIYA

By

Imām Abū 'Abd Allah Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Hanbal al-Shaibānī

(Ibn Hanbal 780-855, *Tadhkirat al Huffāz*, vol. 2, p. 18.)

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful:  
Allah's blessing on Muḥammad and his household.<sup>1</sup>

Abu'l Tāhir al-Mubārak b. al-Mubārak b. al-Ma'tūsh informed us, in writing, (saying): Abu'l Ghanāim Muḥ. b. Muḥ. b. Aḥmad b. al-Muhtadī billahi, permitting them, (said): Abu'l Qasim 'Abdul 'Azīz b. 'Ali al-Azajī, permitting them, (said) on the authority of Abū Bakr 'Abdu'l 'Aziz alias Ghulām al-Khallāl,<sup>2</sup> said: Abū Bakr al-Khallāl<sup>3</sup> informed us, granting permission, saying: Al-Khidr b. al-Muthanna al-Kindī informed me, (saying): 'Abd Allah b. Aḥmad b. Hanbal informed us, saying: This is what my father published in refutation of the Zanādiqa and the Jahmiya, concerning the ambiguous passages *mutashābih* in the Qur'ān which they question and misinterpret.

Aḥmad b. Muḥ. b. Hanbal said: Praise be to Allah who in every age (and) *fatra*<sup>4</sup> raises up a remnant of learned men, who bearing ill-use patiently, recall the lost to guidance; revive the dead and give sight to blind eyes by means of Allah's book and His light. Many a one slain by Iblīs have they resurrected! Many a one lost and wandering have they guided aright! How much good have they done others, and how much ill has been done them! They bar from Allah's book the corruptions of the extravagant,<sup>5</sup> the false professions of the strippers<sup>6</sup> and the interpretations of

<sup>1</sup> The pious expressions found after the name of the Prophet and others have been omitted from the translation.

<sup>2</sup> Ghulām al-Khallāl + 363, A. H. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* II, pp. 119-127.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Khallāl + 311 A. H. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, II, pp. 12-15. Al-Dhail 'ala *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila* p. 12 f. *Tadhkirat al-Huffāz*, Vol. 3, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Fatra*: an interregnum in the prophetic succession; an interval.

<sup>5</sup> *Ghali* pl. *ghulāt* MSS, *ghaliyin*: those holding extreme Shi'a beliefs.

<sup>6</sup> *Mubṭilin*, *Ibṭāl* is intenser form of ta'tīl, 'stripping' Cf. Shorter Ency. Islam *Tashbih*.

the ignorant. (p. 2b). All such as fly the flag of heresy and let loose rebellion; Allah's book they dispute over, contradict and unanimously set aside; they speak of Allah and say about Him and His book they know not what; they discuss what is ambiguous in *Kalām* and deceive the ignorant with their impositions. To Allah we fly for refuge from the guile of the seducers!

### I. *Jahm's Doctrine of God*

Such was Jahm and his faction who called men to (their interpretations of) the ambiguities in the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth* and thereby misled many. This is what we have learned of Jahm the enemy of Allah! He hailed from Tirmidh in *Khurāsān*; he was disputatious and argumentative, concerning himself mostly with the doctrine of Allah. He encountered certain polytheists called *Sumaniya*<sup>1</sup> who, knowing Jahm, proposed to debate with him on the condition that the vanquished embraced the faith of the victor.

Part of their argument ran as follows: They said:—

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| — You assert that you have a God?             | — Yes |
| — Have you (p. 3a) seen your God?             | — No  |
| — Have you heard him speak?                   | — No  |
| — Have you smelled him?                       | — No  |
| — Have you sensed him in any way?             | — No  |
| — Have you touched him?                       | — No  |
| — Then what makes you believe that he is God? |       |

Jahm was puzzled and for forty days did not know whom to worship. He finally supplied an argument similar to one used by Christians (lit. *Christian Zanādiqa*). Christians allege that the spirit in Jesus is the spirit from Allah's essence. When Allah wished to bring something about, He entered one of his creatures and spoke with its tongue, commanding or forbidding as He desired. He is an invisible spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Indo-Buddhist philosophers, or Harrānian pagan philosophers; see Mas'ūdī's *al-Tanbih wa'l-Isbrāf*, pp. 138, 139.



Jahm argued in the same fashion and said to the Sumanī:

- Do you not assert that you have a spirit in you? — Yes
- Have you seen your spirit? — No
- Have you heard it speak? — No
- Have you sensed it in any way or touched it? — No
- Similarly with Allah: His face is not seen, His voice is not heard; nor is He smelled; He is invisible: He is in no (p. 3b) one place to the exclusion of any other.

Jahm found three ambiguous verses in the Qur'ān:

(1) 'Nought is like him', Q.42, 9<sup>1</sup>. (2) 'He is God in the Heavens and on the earth', Q.6: 3, and (3) 'No vision reaches Him', Q.6: 103, on which he built his system. He misinterpreted the Qur'ān and impugned the Ḥadīth of the Prophet, alleging that he who ascribes to Allah those qualities which He ascribes to Himself in his Book or which the Prophet speaks about, is a *kāfir* and a *mushabbīh*.<sup>2</sup> He misled many people and found supporters among the companions of Abū Ḥanifa and 'Amr b. 'Ubaid in Basrah. He founded the religion of the Jahmiya.

When asked to explain the text, 'Nought is like Him,' they reply:—Among things, nothing is like Him; He is under the seven earths as He is on His throne; there is no place where He is not, and he is not in one place to the exclusion of any other; He has never spoken and does not speak; no one can see Him in this world or the next; He is not qualifiable, neither is He known by any attribute or act; He has no limit or end; mind cannot apprehend Him; He is all face, all light, all power, without being two (p. 4a) separate things; in Him is neither upper nor lower, no directions and no sides, no right and no left; He is neither heavy nor light; no light has He nor body; nor is He

<sup>1</sup> All Qurānic quotations are from Rodwell's tr., London, 1918, unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>2</sup> *Mushābbiha*: those guilty of *tashbīh*, anthropomorphism. Ahmad b. Ḥanbal compromises himself on this score by holding fast the Tradition that Allah created Adam in His image. He combated those who said that Allah created Adam in Adam's image by asking: What image did Adam have before Allah created him? *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, II, p. 131.

passible, *ma'mūl*. Whenever you think that He is something you know, He is other than that.

We: He is a thing.

They: He is a thing unlike things. To which we replied that every thinking person knew that a thing unlike things was nothing at all. It thus became evident to everyone that they believed nothing at all, but made open profession to ward off disgust. If asked whom they worshipped, they replied that they worshipped the arbiter of all creation. We then asked whether that arbiter was unknown (*majhūl*) and also His attributes. This they admitted. We then said:—Muslims now know that you believe nothing at all, but make some profession to ward off disgust.

We asked them if that arbiter was the one who had spoken to Moses. They replied that He had not spoken and did not speak. Speech was through an organ and organs were taboo as far as Allah was concerned. An ignorant person hearing them would think that they glorified Allah as no one else did without being aware that it all amounted to (p. 4b) forging lies against Allah.

## II. *A Refutation of Jahm's Doctrine of the Qur'ān: the Meaning of ja'ala*

Ask a Jahmī where in Allah's book or in the Sunna he will find it said that the Qur'ān was created. Unable to find, he will say that it is (inferred) from Allah's words: 'We have made it an Arabic Koran', Q.43: 2, alleging that *Ja'ala maj'ūl* is (synonymous with) *makhlūq*, basing his claim on one of the ambiguous verses which are adduced by those who reject the Qur'ān as revelation and misinterpret it with intent to sow discord.

*Ja'ala*, when referring to creatures, has two different meanings in the Qur'ān: it may mean naming, *Tasmiya*, or doing. The first use occurs in the following verses: 'Who break up the Koran into parts', Q.15: 91, saying that it



consists of poetry, chronicles of the ancients and confused dreams: that is they name it so. And again, 'They make the angels who are the servants of the God of Mercy, females', Q.43: 18, that is they call them females. The second use, when it does not mean naming but doing, occurs in the following verse: 'They thrust their fingers into their ears', Q.2: 18; again, 'Until when he had made it red with heat (fire)', Q.18: 95; in these verses *ja'ala* means performing an action and refers to the act of a creature.

(p. 5a) When *ja'ala* is used of Allah to signify creation it invariably means creation and nothing but creation; if used of Allah to signify something other than creation, it is not creation and never stands for creation. In the following verses *ja'ala* signifies creation: 'Praise be to God who has created the Heavens and the Earth, and ordained (*ja'ala*) the darkness and the light', Q.6: 1—that is, He created them, And again, 'And gifted (*ja'ala*) you with hearing and sight', Q.67: 23—that is He created them. And again, 'We have made (*ja'ala*) the night and the day for two signs', Q.17: 13 'And hath placed (*ja'ala*) there the sun as a torch', Q.71: 15. And again, 'He it is who hath created you from a single person and from him brought forth (*ja'ala*) his wife', Q.7: 189. And again, 'And of him created his wife' Q.4: 1. And again, 'And have placed (*ja'ala*) mountains upon it', Q.27: 62, that is, He created mountains upon it. There are many such verses in the Qur'ān in all of which *ja'ala* means creation and nothing else.

*ja'ala*, however, is also used to mean something other than creation, as in the following verses: 'God hath not ordained (*ja'ala*) anything on the subject of Bahīra, or Sāiba', Q.5: 102, which does not mean that Allah did not create Bahīra and Sāiba. And again, Allah said to Abraham, 'I am about to make thee (*jā'iluka*) an imam to mankind', Q.2: 118. Here, too, it does not mean (p. 5b) 'I will create thee' because Abraham's creation had taken place already. Abraham said, 'Lord! Make this secure land,' Q.2: 120; and he said, 'Lord! Grant that I and my posterity may

observe prayer', Q.14: 42. He did not mean create me an observer of prayer. And again, 'God will refuse (*lā yaj'alu*) them all part in the life to come' Q.3: 170. Allah said to the mother of Moses, 'We will restore him to thee, and make him one of the apostles', Q.28: 6; this did not mean to create him one of the apostles—as Allah promised his mother to restore him to her and then make him an apostle. And again, 'Put the bad one upon the other, and heap them all up and put them into Hell!' Q.8: 38. And again, 'And we were minded to show favour to those who were brought low in the land, and to make them spiritual chiefs'—no creation is intended—'and to make them Pharaoh's heirs' Q.28: 4. And finally, 'And when God manifested Himself to the mountain he turned it (*ja'ala*) to dust'! Q.7: 139. There are many such verses in the Qur'ān, in all of which *ja'ala* does not mean creation. Now if Allah uses *ja'ala* to mean creation and *ja'ala* to mean something else, on what ground does the Jahmī say that *ja'ala* (only) means creation. If the Jahmī restores to *ja'ala* the meaning Allah gives it (well and good); if not, he will be (p. 6a) one of those who hear the word of Allah and then wilfully pervert it.

Now when Allah says, 'We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān', He means He made it Arabic in the sense of an action performed by God, not in the sense of creation. God says in Sūrat Yūsuf<sup>1</sup>: 'We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān that ye may understand' Q.43: 2. And again, 'That thou mightest become a warner—in the clear Arabic tongue', Q.26: 194, 195. And again, 'Verily we have made this *Koran* easy and in thine own tongue', Q.19: 97. In such phrases as 'making an Arabic Qur'ān' and 'making it easy' and 'in the Prophet's own tongue' the reference is to one of Allah's actions; and 'making it in clear Arabic' means that it is a clear exposition for him whom Allah would guide aright.

The Jahmī made another absurd assertion. He said: 'Tell us about the Qur'ān: Is it Allah or other than Allah?'

<sup>1</sup> The verse is found in Sūrat Zukhruf and not in Sūrat Yūsuf.



—an assertion which confused people. If this question were put to an ignorant person, he must necessarily say that it was one or the other. If he said it was Allah, the Jahmī would say: 'You have denied the faith'. But if he said (p. 6b) it was other than Allah, the Jahmī would say: 'Well spoken, why then cannot a thing other than Allah be created?' This would so affect the mind of the ignorant as to predispose him to what the Jahmī had said, all of which is simply Jahmite sophistry. The answer to the Jahmī's question is to tell him that Allah did not say in the Qur'ān, 'the Qur'ān is I', nor did He say, 'the Qur'ān is other than I'; He said, 'the Qur'ān is my word', so we name it as He did, *Kalām Allah*. And those who name it as Allah named it are rightly guided, but those who name it by some other name have gone astray.

Allah distinguished between His word and His creation, which he never named speech. He said: 'Is not creation and command (*amr*) His?'<sup>1</sup> When He says 'Is not creation His', He includes all created things; He then mentions things which are not created referring to them as *amr*—that is His word. Blessed be Allah, Lord of the worlds; (far be it) for His word to be a thing created. Again He says: 'See! On a blessed night have we sent it down, for we would warn mankind: on the night wherein all things (lit: every *amr*) are disposed in wisdom' Q.44: 3. He continues: 'By virtue of our behest (*amr*)' Q.44: 4. And again, 'First and last is the affair (*amr*) with God', Q.30: 3, which means that the word is His before and after creation. (p. 7a). Allah then creates and commands and His word is other than His creation. And again, "This is God's command (*amr*) which He hath sent down to you', Q.65: 5. And finally, 'Until our sentence (*amr*) came to pass, and the earth's surface boiled up' Q.11: 42.

### III. *A Proof from the Conjunctive Waw that the Qur'ān is Other than Creation*

BĀB: An exposition of the distinction made by Allah

<sup>1</sup> Rodwell: 'Is not all creation and its empire His?' Q.7: 52.

between His word and His creation.

When Allah refers to a single object by two or three names, they are listed loosely (asyndetically) with no distinction drawn. But when Allah names two different things, he does not leave them loose, but introduces a distinction (i.e. the construction is syndetic). Thus He says: 'O Prince! Verily he hath a father, a sheikh, one of great age',<sup>1</sup> all of which refer to one person by three names listed loosely (asyndetically); He does not say: 'A father and a sheikh and one of great age', Again, 'Haply if he put you both away, his Lord will give him in exchange other wives better than you, Muslims, believers, devout . . . women previously married, and virgins'. Now 'virgins' being different from 'women previously married', the construction is not left loose, but a distinction is introduced by saying 'and virgins'. And again: 'The blind and the seeing are not alike', Q.35: 20, the 'seeing' being different persons from the 'blind', they are distinguished. He then continues: 'Neither the darkness and light; nor the shade and the hot wind'; each of these things being different, a distinction is introduced. Again, 'He is the King, the Holy, the Peaceful, the Faithful, the Guardian, the Mighty, the Strong, (p. 7b) the Most High! . . . the Producer, the Maker, the Fashioner!' Q.59: 23, 24. All this being one person, the construction is loose with no distinction introduced. Ergo, when Allah says: 'Is not creation and command (*amr*) His?' a distinction is introduced because creation is different from command.

#### IV. *The Qur'ān Revealed not Created*

BĀB: An exposition of Allah's denial that the Qur'ān is other than revelation, or that it is created.

He has said: 'By the star when it setteth your compatriot erreth not, nor is he led astray', Q.53: 1, 2. This

<sup>1</sup> Rodwell's freer translation: "O Prince! Verily he hath a very aged father! Q.12: 78, does not make this point clear. The same is the case with verse Q.66: 5 which follows.



was because the Quraish contended that the Qur'ān was poetry, or legends of the ancients or confused dreams, or Muḥammad's own logomachy, or something he had learned from someone else. So Allah swore by the setting star, that is by the Qur'ān which He had sent down, and said: 'By the star when it setteth your compatriot'—that is Muḥammad—'ereth not, nor is he led astray. Neither speaketh he from mere impulse'. That is Muḥammad did not recite the Qur'ān from himself. 'The Koran is no other than a revelation revealed to him', Q.53: 1-4. Allah thus denied that the Qur'ān was other than revelation, saying so explicitly. He then says: 'One terrible in power taught it him' Q.53: 5—that is Gabriel taught it to Muḥammad—(p. 8a) who 'With even balance stood' Q.53: 6, 7, and concludes, 'And He revealed to His servant what He revealed', Q.53: 10. Allah thus named the Qur'ān revelation not creation.

#### V. *The Qur'ān is a Thing*

BĀB: The Jahmī made yet another claim. "Tell us", he said, "Is the Qur'ān a thing?"—"Yes," we replied. He said: "Seeing that the Qur'ān is a thing and Allah is the creator of all things, why cannot the Qur'ān be one of the things created?" Here was something which gave substance to his claim and enabled him to confuse men. We then said: "Allah, in the Qur'ān, did not name his word a thing, but the things He addressed were so named by Him. Did we not hear Him say: 'Our word to a thing' ? Q.16: 42. The thing then is not His word but the thing so addressed. And again: 'His command when He willeth aught (a thing) is but to say to it, Be, and it is' Q.36: 82. The thing is not His command, but is that which His command brought into being.

The following are some of the signs and proofs to show that His word is not among things created: Allah said to the wind which He sent against Ād: 'It will destroy everything at the bidding of the Lord' Q.46: 24, and yet, there

were certain things such as their houses and dwellings and the surrounding mountains (p. 8b) which the wind did not destroy, even though He said it would destroy everything. Likewise, 'Creator of all things' was not meant to include Himself, or His knowledge or His word among created things.

Again, He said of the Queen of Sheba, 'Gifted with everything', Q.27: 23, although King Solomon's sovereignty was a 'thing' which she was not given. Similarly, when Allah says, 'Creator of all things', He does not mean His word to be included among created things. Again, Allah said to Moses: 'I have chosen thee for Myself (*linafsi*)', Q.20: 43. And again, 'But God would have you beware of Himself', Q.3: 28. And again, 'He had imposed mercy on Himself', Q.6: 12. Also, 'Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee', Q.5: 116. He then says: 'Every soul (*nafs*) shall taste of death', Q.3: 182. Every sensible man will know that Allah did not mean (to include) Himself (lit. His *nafs*) among the souls which will taste death, although He said 'Every soul'. Likewise, when He said, 'Creator of all things', He did not mean to include among created things Himself, His knowledge or His word. This is clear proof for him who is wise in the things of Allah. Allah's mercy on him who, on reflection, rejects that which contradicts the Kitāb and the Sunna and who says nothing but the truth concerning Allah.

Allah made a covenant with His creatures and said: 'Hath there not been received on their part a covenant through the Scripture that they should speak nought of God but the truth?' Q.7: 168. And again, 'Truly my Lord hath forbidden filthy actions whether open or secret, (p. 9a) and iniquity, and unjust violence, and to associate with God that for which He hath sent down no warranty, and to speak of God that ye know not', Q.7: 31. Allah thus forbids men to lie regarding Him: 'And on the resurrection day, thou shalt see those who have lied of God, with their faces black', Q.39: 61. Allah protect us and you from the seductions of those who would lead us astray.



Allah refers to His word in another place in the Qur'ān naming it *kalām* not creation: 'And words of prayer learned Adam from his Lord', Q.2: 35. And again, 'Yet a part of them heard the word of God and then . . . perverted it', Q.2: 70. And again, 'And when Moses came at our set time and his Lord spake with him', Q.7: 139. And again, 'He said, "O Moses, thee above all men have I chosen by my commissions and by my speaking to thee"', Q.7: 141. And again, 'And discoursing did God discourse with Moses (*kallama takliman*)', Q.4: 162. And again, 'Therefore believe on God and His Apostle—the unlettered Prophet—who believeth in God and His word', Q.7: 158. Allah thus informed us that the Prophet believed in Allah's word. And again, 'Fain would they change the word of God', Q.48: 15. And again, 'Say; should the sea become ink, to write the words of my Lord, the sea would surely fail ere the words of my Lord would fail', Q.18: 109. Again, 'If any one of those who join gods with God ask an asylum of thee, grant him an asylum that he may hear the word of God', Q.9: 6. He did not say 'that he may hear the creation of God'. Moreover, this is explicitly set out in plain Arabic and does not require the interpretation of believers. Praise be to Allah.

VI. *Allah has not Forbidden us to say 'The Qur'ān is His Word'* (p. 9b) BĀB: I asked Jahm the question: Did not Allah declare: "Say ye: 'We believe in God'?" Q.2: 130. And again, 'Speak with men what is right', Q.2: 77. And again, "And say ye, 'We believe in what hath been sent down to us and hath been sent down to you'" Q.29: 45. And again, '. . . Speak with well-guided speech' Q.33: 70. And again, 'Say: Bear ye witness that we are Muslims', Q.3: 57. And again, 'Say: O men, now hath the truth come unto you from your Lord,' Q.10: 108. And again, '. . . Say: Peace be upon you!' Q.6: 54. Nowhere do we hear Allah say: 'My *kalām* is creation'.

And again, He said: '. . . And say not "Three", . . . Forbear', Q.4: 169. And again, ". . . And say not to

everyone who meeteth you with a greeting, 'Thou art not a believer' " Q.4: 96. "... Say not . . . 'Rā'ina'," Q.2: 98. And again, 'And say not of those who are slain on God's path that they are dead', Q.2: 149. And again, " Say not thou of a thing, 'I will surely do it tomorrow', without 'if God will'," Q.18: 23. And again, 'And say not to them, "Fie" Neither reproach them', Q.17: 24. And again, 'Call not thou on any other god but God', Q.26: 213. And again, '. . . And that ye slay not your children because of poverty', Q.6: 152. And again, 'And let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck', Q.17: 31. And again, '. . . And that ye slay not anyone whom God hath forbidden you, unless for a just cause', Q.6: 152. And again, 'And come not nigh to the substance of the orphan, but to improve it', Q.6: 153. And again, 'And walk not proudly on the earth', Q.17: 39. There are many such verses in the Qur'ān—Allah's prohibitions, but He has never forbidden us to say: 'the Qur'ān is my word'.

The angels called Allah's word *kalām* not creation: He says: 'Until at last when their hearts shall be relieved from terror, they shall say, 'What (p. 10a) saith your Lord?', Q.34: 22. This refers to the angels, <sup>1</sup>who hearing the voice of revelation like iron striking a rock—not having heard it for a number of years—between the coming of Jesus and Muḥammad—(p. 10b) took it for one of the events of the Day of Judgement<sup>2</sup> and fell down on their faces in worship full of fear. And when, at last, their hearts were relieved from terror, they raised their heads asking each of each: "What saith your Lord?" They did not say; "What hath your Lord created." This is clear proof for him whom Allah would guide aright.

#### VII. *The Meaning of Muḥdath with Reference to the Qur'ān*

Another BĀB: Jahm made yet another claim, he said: "I find a verse in Allah's book which proves the Qur'ān to

<sup>1</sup> There are several versions of this tradition in *Kitāb al-Sunna* pp. 62, 63. The word *ṣalṣalah* a rumbling noise is used. In al-Tirmidhī the word used is *silsilah*—the sound of an iron chain dragging on a rock. Al-Tirmidhī, with Ibn al-'Arabi's commentary, Vol. 12, Cairo, 1934. Cf. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, I, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *al-Sā'ah*, the Hour.



be created.” “Which verse?” “Allah’s words: ‘Every fresh warning (*dhikr muḥdath*)<sup>1</sup> that cometh to them from their Lord’, Q.21: 2, and every *muḥdath* is created.” He thus confused people using ambiguous verses for his purpose. We answered in the following words, after seeking aid from Allah and studying His book. To Allah alone belong all might and all power!

You must know that when two persons—one worthier than the other—are jointly referred to by a general term (p. 11a) when a word of praise is ascribed to them, it is more likely to refer to the more deserving of the two, while a word of blame is more applicable to the other. When Allah says in His book: “. . . For God is right gracious to mankind (*nās*), Merciful”, Q.22: 64, and again, “A fount whence the servants (*‘ibād*) of God shall drink,” Q.76: 6, the general terms are *nās*<sup>2</sup> and *‘ibād* but the “Fount whence the servants of God shall drink” is for the just, not for the wicked; for speaking of them singly, He says: “Surely amid delights shall the righteous dwell,” Q.82: 13: and He says of the wicked: “But verily, the impure in Hell-fire,” Q.82: 14. When He says: “. . . For God is right gracious to mankind, merciful,” Q.22: 64, the believer is more deserving of it, even though the general term *nās* is used, because when He refers to the believer singly, He assigns mercy, saying: “And merciful is He to the believers,” Q.33: 42. But when He singles out the wicked, He imputes blame saying: “Shall not the malison of God be on these unjust doers?” Q.11: 21. And again, “. . . For God is angry with them” Q.5: 83. All such are outside Allah’s mercy.

And again, “Should God bestow abundance upon His servants (*‘ibād*), they might act wantonly on the earth,” Q.42: 26. (p. 11b) The general term *‘ibād* includes both believers and unbelievers, but ‘wantonness’ is more applicable to unbelievers than believers, for believers, when singled out, are praised for the use they make of the

<sup>1</sup> *Muḥdath*; fresh, originated.

<sup>2</sup> MS: *insān*.

abundance bestowed upon them. This is what Allah said: "Those who when they spend are neither lavish nor niggard," Q.25: 67. And again, "... And out of what we have bestowed on them, expend for God," Q.2: 2. King David, and his son Solomon and Dhu'l Qarnain were liberally endowed, and so were Abū Bakr and 'Uthmān, and many others like them who yet did not act wantonly. But the unbelievers, when singled out, are called wanton. Wantonness is ascribed to Qārūn (Korah), concerning whom He says: "... But he behaved haughtily toward them; (for we have given him treasure that its keys would have burdened a company of men of strength)" Q.28: 76. Also Nimrod, the son of Kan'ān, "... Who disputed with Abraham about his Lord," when "God had given him the kingdom," Q.2: 260. Also Pharaoh, of whom Moses said: "O our Lord! Thou hast indeed given to Pharaoh and his nobles splendour and riches in this present life," Q.10: 88. The believers and the unbelievers jointly referred to by a general term, the wantonness ascribed is more applicable to the unbeliever, as mercy is more applicable where the believer is concerned. Therefore when Allah says: "Every fresh warning that cometh to them from their Lord," two warnings are jointly spoken of—that of Allah and that of His Prophet. When Allah's warning is spoken of singly, *ḥadath* is not used. Did you not hear Him say: "... And the gravest duty is the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God?" And a blessed remembrance it is! But when the Prophet's warning is singled out, *ḥadath* (fresh, new) is applied. Did we not hear Allah say: "God hath created you and what ye make?" Q.37: 94. The Prophet's warning has, therefore, a maker, Allah being its creator and originator.

The proof that Allah refers jointly to two warnings is when He says: (p. 12a) "Every fresh warning cometh..." qualifying the warning as fresh (*ḥadath*) when we are told it, and it only comes, as you know by information brought to us by an informant and a monitor. Allah has said: "Yet warn them for, in truth, warning will profit the believers."



Q.51: 55. "Warn, therefore, for the warning is profitable." Q.87: 9. "For thou art a warner only," Q.88: 21. The two being referred to jointly by one term—warning—they are described as 'fresh' (*ḥadath*). But spoken of singly, the Prophet's warning is more suitably called 'creation' and 'fresh' than is Allah's warning, which if singled out cannot be called either 'creation' or 'fresh'. This then is our proof from Allah's word that the 'fresh warning' from the Lord is fresh as far as the Prophet is concerned who did not know it until he learned it from Allah and in that sense is *muḥdath*.

### VIII. *The Qur'ān, Unlike Jesus, is Uncreated*

BĀB: Then the Jahmī made this claim. He said: "I have found a verse in Allah's book to prove that the Qur'ān is created." We: "Which verse is it?" He: "It is Allah's word: 'The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God and His Word . . . ' Q.4: 169. Now Jesus (the Word) is created, (so why cannot the Qur'ān be created?)" We replied: "Allah has deprived you of reason: the things said concerning Jesus in the Qur'ān cannot be said of the Qur'ān. Jesus is called offspring, infant, child and youth; he used to eat and drink; he was commanded and restrained with promise and threat; he was, moreover, descended from Noah and Abraham. We cannot say of the Qur'ān what we say about Jesus. Did you ever hear Allah do so? But what Allah means (p. 12b) when He says, "The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God and His word which He conveyed into Mary," Q.4: 169, "is that the word which Allah cast into Mary was His saying to him: 'Be!' (*Kun!*) Jesus was, therefore, brought into being by 'Be!' but was not himself that 'Be!' 'Be!' is Allah's word and is uncreated."

The Christians and the Jahmiya lie concerning Allah in matters referring to Jesus. The Jahmiya say: "Jesus is Allah's Spirit and His Word—which Word is created". The Christians say: "Jesus is Allah's Spirit from His own essence and Allah's Word from His own essence", as we

would say, "this scrap of cloth is from that garment". We say that Jesus was brought into being by Allah's word, Jesus himself not being that word. And when Allah says that Jesus is "A spirit proceeding from Himself (*minhu*)," Q.4: 169, it means that the spirit was in him by Allah's command, as when He says: "And He hath subjected to you all that is in the Heaven and all that is on the Earth, all is from Him (*minhu*)," Q.45: 12, where it means that it is by His command. And the interpretation of the words "Allah's spirit" is a spirit created by Allah's word, just as we would say "Allah's servant," and "Allah's heaven."<sup>1</sup>

### IX. *Allah's Word is Above the Heavens*

BĀB: The Jahmī made yet another claim, saying: "Allah said, '... Who in six days created the Heavens and the Earth, and whatever is between them'," Q.25: 60. He, therefore, asserted that the Qur'ān must be either in heaven, on earth or in between. This was the way he confused and deceived people.

We said: "Did not Allah call 'creation' things in heaven, on earth and in between?" He agreed.<sup>2</sup> We: (p. 132) "Are there any created objects above the heavens?" He answered: "Yes." We: "He did not include things above the heavens among created things and every scholar knows that above the seven heavens are the seat, the throne, the preserved tablet, the veils and many things unnamed which are not included among things created. Allah was only speaking of things in heaven, things on earth and things in between. Why then do you allege that the Qur'ān must either be in heaven, on earth or in between?"

We: "Allah says: 'We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that between them is, but for a worthy

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hanbal's denial that Jesus is named *kalimat Allah* seems in contradiction with "This is Jesus, the son of Mary, the Word of Truth (*qaul al-haqq*)," Q.19: 35. But see Rodwell's freer translation: "This is Jesus, the son of Mary: this is a statement of the truth . . .", see also Q.3. 40.

<sup>2</sup> After using the singular for Jahm, Ibn Hanbal here reverts to the plural. We have diverted from the MS in several Bābs using the singular or the plural throughout for the sake of uniformity.

end”<sup>1</sup> Q.15: 85. Now, therefore, that with which heaven and earth were created existed before the heavens and the earth. This ‘truth’ (*haqq*) with which He created them is His word (*qaul*), (as it says) ‘But God speaketh the truth’, Q.33: 4. And again, ‘It is the truth and the truth I speak’, Q.38: 85. Also, ‘. . . And when He saith to a thing “Be!” it is. His word is the truth’<sup>2</sup> Q.6: 72, 73. This is the truth (*haqq*) with which He created heaven and earth and truth (*haqq*) is His word (*qaul*), which is uncreated.”

### X. *The Beatific Vision*

BĀB: An exposition of the denial by the Jahmiya of Allah’s words: “On that day shall faces beam with light, looking at their Lord”<sup>3</sup> Q.75: 22. We asked them: “Why do you deny that those in Paradise will look at their Lord?” They replied: “It is not proper for any one to look at his Lord: a thing looked at is passible and qualifiable; things are only seen by refraction.”<sup>4</sup> “Does not Allah say,” we then asked, “‘Looking at their Lord?’” They replied: “It means that they look at their reward from their Lord and His work and power” quoting the verse: “Hast thou not (p. 13b) seen thy Lord lengthening out the shadow?”<sup>5</sup> Q.25: 47. They said further: “When He said, ‘Hast thou not seen thy Lord . . .’ it meant ‘thy Lord’s work’.” We replied: “Allah’s works are continually being seen by His creatures; and when He says ‘Faces beam with light, looking at their Lord’, it means that they will see Him—and their reward in addition.” They said: “Allah is not seen in this world or the next” quoting one of the ambiguous verses where Allah says, “No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision,” Q.6: 103. But

<sup>1</sup> Lit.: ‘But with truth’—*bi’l haqq*—i.e. using truth as an instrument.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hanbal, joining the two verses reads: “. . . And when He says to a thing ‘Be’ it is His word *al-haqq*.”

<sup>3</sup> Rodwell: “Onlooking towards their Lord.”

<sup>4</sup> For the Orthodox view see the Ibāna: “Vision does [not leave a mark on the thing seen, for the vision of the beholder remains in him.” Klein, p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> Rodwell: “Hast thou not seen how thy Lord lengthened out the shadow.” If this version is right, it would seem to favour the Jahmiya interpretation.



the prophet, who knew what Allah meant, said: "You will surely see your Lord."<sup>1</sup> And Allah said to Moses, "... Thou shalt not see me," Q.7: 139, but did not say, "I shall not be seen." Who then of the two is more deservedly followed: the Prophet who said, "You will surely see your Lord," or Jahm who said, "You shall not see your Lord?"

There are, moreover, traditions in the keeping of the learned, which they have from the Prophet, that those in Paradise shall see their Lord. This is held unanimously by all of them. There is the ḥadīth by Sufyān (+161), on the authority of Abū Ishāq, on the authority of 'Āmir b. Sa'd, concerning Allah's word: "Goodness itself and an increase of it for those who do good!" Q.10: 27. The 'increase', he said, is seeing Allah's face.<sup>2</sup>

Again, there is also the ḥadīth by Thābit al-Bunānī, on the authority of 'Abdu'l Raḥmān b. Abū Laila (c. 702), who said: "When those in Paradise have settled there, a herald will cry saying: 'Dwellers of Paradise! Allah has allowed you a visit'. Then will the veil be lifted and they will look upon Allah. There is no God beside Him!"<sup>3</sup> We truly (p. 14a) hope that Jahm and his faction will be among those who will not see their Lord, and will be shut out from His presence, because Allah has said of the unbelievers: "Yes, they shall be shut out as by a veil from their Lord on that day." Q.83:15. If then the unbeliever and believer alike are both shut out from Allah, what advantage has the believer over the unbeliever? Praise be to Allah for not making us like Jahm and his faction and for making us followers not innovators.

## XI. *Allah's Speech: His Attributes do not Invalidate His Unity*

BĀB: An exposition of the denial by the Jahmiya that Allah spoke to Moses.

<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb al-Sunna*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> The Isnād in *K. al-Sunna* omits Sufyān and introduces Abū Bakr as the one who heard it from the Prophet, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> There are several versions of the Tradition in *K. al-Sunna* and one enlarged version with some verbal changes. Part I, pp. 44, 45.

We said: "Why do you deny it?" They replied: "Allah has not spoken and does not speak. He has made something which enunciated for Him, and created a voice to be heard. Speech," they asserted, "requires an interior, a tongue and lips." We asked: "Is it proper for a created thing other than Allah to say, 'O Moses, I am your Lord', or to say, 'Verily, I am God: there is no God but me, therefore worship me and observe prayer for a remembrance of me'?" Q.20: 14. Who could possibly suppose<sup>1</sup> that someone other than Allah claimed lordship? If it were as the Jahmiya said that Allah made something, would that created thing say, "O Moses, I am Allah, the Lord of the world," having already said, "And discoursing did God discourse with Moses," Q.4: 162; and again, "And when Moses came at our set time and His Lord spake with him . . ." And again: "Thee above all men have I chosen by my commissions and by my speaking with thee?" Q.7: 141.

Apart from the text of the Qur'ān itself, what will they do with the ḥadīth of Al-A'mash (c. 767), on the authority of Khaithama, on the authority of 'Adī b. Hātim al-Tāī' (+686), who said, "Allah's Apostle has said, 'Everyone of you will be addressed by his Lord without an intermediary (lit: *tarjumān*)' "<sup>2</sup> (p. 14b) As for their contention that speech is only possible by means of an interior, a mouth, lips and tongue, did not Allah say to heaven and earth, ". . . Come ye, whether in obedience or against your will?" and they both said, "We come obedient." Q.41: 10. Do you suppose that they said it with an interior, a mouth, lips and tongue? And again, "And we constrained the mountains and the birds to join with David in our praise," Q.21: 79. Do you suppose that they joined in praise by means of an interior, a mouth, tongue and lips? It was Allah who made them speak as He desired. Allah, likewise, spoke as He willed without our mentioning an interior, mouth, lips and tongue.

<sup>1</sup> Reading *yaẓ'am* instead of *za'ama*.

<sup>2</sup> K. *al-Sunna* p. 44.

Choked by these arguments Jahm said: "Allah spoke to Moses but His word was other than Himself." We: "Is this other created?" "Yes," he replied. We rejoined: "This is what you first maintained, except that you would ward off black looks."

Al-Zuhri (+124) says in his *ḥadīth*: "When Moses heard his Lord speak, he asked, 'Are the words I heard your words, Lord?' 'Yes, Moses, I spoke to you in ten thousand tongues and have power of all the tongues and more, but I spoke to you within the limits of what your body can bear. Had I spoken more than that you would have died'. When Moses returned to his people, they said to him: 'Describe to us Allah's speech'. He replied: 'Praise be to Allah! How can I?' They said: 'What is it like?' He replied: 'What I heard was something like the noise of thunderbolts, which when it reached me was the sweetest sound you have ever heard'."<sup>1</sup>

We asked the Jahmiya: "Who other than Allah, speaking on the day of Resurrection, will say, '. . . O Jesus, Son of Mary: hast thou said unto mankind—Take me and my mother as two Gods, beside God'?" Q.5: 116. (p. 152). They replied: "He will make something to enunciate for Him, as He did with Moses." We asked further: "Who other than Allah says: 'Surely, therefore, will we call those to account, to whom an Apostle hath been sent, and of the sent ones themselves will we certainly demand a reckoning. And with knowledge will we tell them . . .'" Q.7: 5, 6. They replied: "He will in all cases make something which will enunciate for Him." We then said: "You have grossly lied against Allah by asserting that He does not speak, and thus likening Him to the idols, who neither speak, nor move, nor pass from place to place, whom you serve instead of Allah."

When thus defeated in argument, they said: "Allah did speak, but His speech was created." We said: "You have, by this assertion, likened Allah to His creatures for,

<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb al-Sunna* I, pp. 63, 64; II p. 153.



according to your belief, there was a time when He did not speak. So are the sons of men, who could not speak until He created speech for them. This is infidelity *Kufr* and *tashbīh*<sup>1</sup> together. Far be it from Allah! We say the opposite: Allah was always a speaker when He wished. We do not maintain that He was without speech until He created it; nor that He was without knowledge until He created it; nor do we say that He was without power, light or might until He created them for Himself."

The Jahmiya had this to say in reply to our attributing these qualities: "If you say, 'Allah (was) and (so was) His light, Allah and His power, Allah and His might', you are speaking like the Christians, since you assert that Allah was ever existing and (so was) His light and His power." We replied: "We do not say, 'Allah was ever existing and His power', or 'Allah was ever existing (p. 15b) and His light', but we do say, 'Allah was ever existing in His power (*bi-qudratihi*), and in His light', (saying) neither when nor how He had power." They said: "You will never be unitarians (*muwahhids*) until you say 'There was Allah and nothing else'." To this we replied: "By saying that Allah was ever existing in all His qualities, are we not truly describing the One God in all His qualities?"

We gave them the following example: "Tell us about this palm tree," we said. "Is it not made up of stump, stem, fibre, foliage, leaves and pith, and for all its attributes has it not one name? Likewise, Allah, who is to be compared to what is loftiest, is one God with all His qualities. We do not say that there was a time when He had no power until He created it for Himself, for to be without power is to be impotent; nor do we say that there was a time when He did not know, for he who does not know is ignorant. But we say, 'Allah was ever knowing, powerful and possessing' (saying) neither when nor how.

"And again, Allah referring to an infidel called al-Walīd b. Al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra al-Makhzūmī, said: 'Leave me

<sup>1</sup> Comparing God to man.

to deal with him whom I have created, one (*wahīd*)<sup>1</sup>, Q.74: 11. The one so named had eyes, ears, a tongue, lips, hands, feet and many members, and is yet named '*wahīd*', all his qualities notwithstanding. Likewise, Allah, who is to be compared to what is loftiest, is with all His qualities one God."

## XII. *Where Allah is and Where He is Not*

BĀB: An exposition of the denial by the Jahmiya that Allah is on the throne.

(p. 16a) We asked them: "Why do you deny that Allah is on the throne when He has said: 'The God of Mercy sitteth on His throne'? Q.20: 4. And again, '... Who in six days created the Heavens and the Earth . . . then mounted His throne'," Q.25: 60. They replied: "He is under the seven earths as He is on the throne; He is in heaven, on earth and in every place; there is no place where He is not, nor is He in one place to the exclusion of any other." And they quoted the verse: "And He is God in the Heavens and on the Earth!" Q.6: 3. We said: "The Muslims know of many a place where there is no trace whatsoever of the might of the Lord." They said: "And where is that?" We replied: "Your bodies, your insides and pigs' insides, in privies and unclean places, in all of which there is no trace of the Lord's might.

"Allah told us that He is in Heaven, saying: 'What! are ye sure that He who is in Heaven will not cleave the Earth beneath you? . . . Or are you sure that He who is in Heaven will not send against you a stone-charged whirlwind'? Q.67: 16, 17. And again, '... The good word riseth up to Him', Q.35: 11. And again, '... O Jesus! Verily I will cause thee to die, and will take thee up to myself', Q.3: 48. And again, '... But God took him up to Himself', Q.4: 156. And again, 'All beings in Heaven and in Earth are His, and they who are in His presence . . .' Q.21: 19. And again, 'They fear their Lord who is above

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hanbal manipulates the text to suit his argument. Rodwell's more exact translation runs: "Leave me alone to deal with him whom I have created."

them' . . . ' Q.16: 52. And again, ' . . . The Master of those ascents', Q.70: 3. And again, 'And He is the Supreme over (lit: above) His servants . . . ' Q.6: 18. And again, ' . . . He is the High, the Great', Q.2: 256. This then tells us that He is in heaven<sup>1</sup>.

"The following verses show us that all beneath Him are villainous: 'Verily the hypocrites shall be in the lowest abyss of the fire . . . ' Q.4: 144. And again, 'And they who believe not shall say, 'O our Lord! Show us those of the jinn and men who led us astray: both of them will we put under our feet (p. 16b) that they may be of the humbled (lit: the lower ones)' " Q.41: 29. We added: "Do you not know that Iblīs has his place and the devils have theirs? Allah and Iblīs cannot both be in one place. The meaning of Allah's word: 'He is God in heaven and upon earth' is that to him belong those in heaven and those on earth; that He is on the throne and that His knowledge embraces all that lies beneath the throne; and that there is no place not embraced by His knowledge. As He has said, ' . . . That ye may know that God hath power over all things, and that God in his knowledge embraceth all things'! Q.65: 12.

"An example illustrating this is that of a man holding in his hand a cup of clear crystal full of a limpid draught; every man's eye takes in the cup without each man lying within the cup. And Allah, who is to be likened to what is loftiest, takes in all His creation without being in any of it. Another apt illustration is that of a man who built a house with all its accessories. He then closed the door and went out: he will not fail, thereupon, to know the number of rooms in his house and their size without being inside it. And Allah, who is to be likened to what is loftiest, embraces all that He has created, knowing how and what it is, without being inside any of His creation."

<sup>1</sup> Later orthodoxy condemned this as *tashbih* and *tajsim*: "Lo, He is seated firmly upon His throne ('*arsh*'), after the manner which He has said, . . . which is far removed from contact and fixity of location and being established and being enveloped and being removed. The throne does not carry Him, but the throne and those that carry it are carried by the grace of His power and mastered by His grasp, etc. A short Creed by al-Gahzālī, quoted from Macdonald's "*Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Law*," p. 301.



XIII. *Allah is by His Knowledge Omnipresent*

BĀB: An exposition of the Jahmiya interpretation of Allah's word: "... Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth ..." Q.58: 8.

We said (referring them to the opening of the same verse), "Allah says: 'Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the Heavens and all that is in the Earth', by which Allah informs us (p. 17a) that He knows what is in the Heavens and on Earth. To which He added: '... Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth ...'—that is, He is so by His knowledge; and, '... Nor five, but He is their sixth'—by His knowledge: and '... Nor fewer nor more, but wherever they be He is with them ...'—by His knowledge: and, '... then on the day of resurrection He will tell them of their deeds: for God knoweth all things'. The verse thus begins and ends with Allah's knowledge."

XIV. *A Refutation that Allah is in Every Place*

BĀB: If you wish to know that the Jahmī lies against Allah, in saying that Allah is in every place and is not in one place to the exclusion of any other, say: "Was there not Allah when there was nothing else?" He will assent. Then say: "When He made a thing, did He do so inside or outside of Himself?" Three possibilities follow: If he asserts that Allah created all things within Himself, including jinn, men and devils, he denies the faith. If he says that He created them outside of Himself and then entered into them, including all the wild, squalid and vile places—this too is infidelity. And if he says He created them outside of Himself and then did not enter into them, he has abandoned his position for that of the *ahl al-Sunna*.

XV. *A Refutation of the Jahmī Position Regarding Allah's Knowledge*

BĀB: If you wish to know that the Jahmī does not profess Allah's knowledge, say to him: "Allah says, '... Yet

nought of His knowledge shall they grasp', Q.2: 256. And again, 'But God is Himself witness of what He hath sent down to thee: in His knowledge hath He sent it down to thee', Q.4: 164. And again, 'But if they answer you not<sup>1</sup>, then know that it hath been sent down to you in the wisdom (lit: knowledge) of God only', Q.11: 17. And again, '. . . No fruit cometh forth from its coverings, neither doth any female conceive, nor is she delivered but with His knowledge', Q.41: 47.

Ask the Jahmī if he professes or does not profess this knowledge of Allah which has been given us by signs (p. 17b) and proofs. If he deny such knowledge, he has denied the faith. If he says: 'Allah's knowledge is newly originated', he has denied the faith by asserting that there was a time when Allah did not know until He made it—and then knew. And if he says, 'Allah's knowledge is uncreated and unoriginated', he has abandoned his position for that of the ahl al-Sunna.

#### XVI. *A Refutation that Allah is in His Creation*

BĀB: An exposition of Allah's reminder in the Qur'ān: "... He is with you," Q.57: 4, which has several meanings.

When Allah said to Moses (addressing him and his brother Aaron): "I am with you both. I will hearken . . ." Q.20: 48, it means 'I will defend you both'. And again, "... In company with a second only! When they two were in the cave; when the Prophet said to his companion, 'Be not distressed. Verily, God is with us' . . ." Q.9: 40—it means to defend us. And again, "... How oft, by God's will hath a small host vanquished a numerous host! And God is with the steadfastly enduring," Q.2: 250—meaning giving them the victory over their enemy. And again, "Be not faint hearted then<sup>2</sup> . . . and invite not the infidels to peace when ye have the upper hand, for God is with you," Q.47: 37—meaning victory over the enemy. And

<sup>1</sup> There is a slight verbal inaccuracy in the MS with the introduction of the word *tawallau*.

<sup>2</sup> The MS inserts '. . . and grieve not . . .' which is not in the Qur'ān.

again, “. . . But they cannot hide themselves from God . . . He is with them,” Q.4: 108—meaning by His knowledge of them. And again, “And when the hosts came in view of one another, the comrades of Moses said, ‘We are surely overtaken’. He said, ‘By no means—for my Lord is with me—He will guide me’,” Q.26: 61, 62—meaning help against Pharaoh.

When Jahm’s assertion that Allah was (in and) with His creation was refuted, he said: “He is in everything, not contiguous nor separated.” We then asked how He could be in everything without being either contiguous or separate. This he could not answer, saying ‘without’ (how)<sup>1</sup>, in order to deceive the ignorant with this make-believe.

We said (p. 18a) to him: “Will there not be Heaven, Hell, the throne and the air at the Resurrection?” “Yes,”<sup>2</sup> he said. “Where then will our Lord be”?, we asked. He replied: “He will be there in all things as He was in the world in all things.” We said: “You then believe that Allah will be divided between the throne, the garden, the fire and the air.” Then their lie against Allah became evident.

#### XVII. *A Refutation that ‘Allah’ is a Created Name*

The Jahmī asserted that ‘Allah’ in the Qur’ān is a created name.<sup>3</sup> We asked: “What was His name before He created this name?” They replied: “He had no name.” We said: “It follows, therefore, that He was ignorant before He created knowledge for Himself, and had no light and no power until He created them for Himself.” The evil man then knew that Allah put him to shame and uncovered his nakedness by the assertion that Allah in the Qur’ān was a created name.

We said to the Jahmiya: “If a person should swear falsely by Allah, the only true God, it would be no perjury,

<sup>1</sup> MS بلا

<sup>2</sup> MS بلا instead of بلى

<sup>3</sup> See al-Ash‘arī’s *Ibāna*, tr. Klein, p. 76.



since he swore by something created and not by the Creator." Allah again put him to shame.

We said to him: "Did not the Prophet, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Ali, the Caliphs which followed them and the rulers and judges, make men swear by Allah, the only true God? But according to you they were wrong, as the Prophet, (p. 18b) and those who followed him, should have sworn by Him who bore the name of Allah, and should have had as their creed, 'There is no God but He who created (the name) Allah', otherwise their profession of the unity (of God) would be wrong." Allah disgraced him for telling lies concerning Him. But we say that 'Allah' is Allah; 'Allah' is not a name: all things are names except 'Allah'.

If Allah did not speak, how did He create all things? Is there another? He created all things by His speech and His word, seeing that He says: "Our word to a thing when we will it, is but to say 'Be', and it is" Q.16: 42. They said: "The meaning of 'Our word to a thing . . . ' is that our wanting it brings it into being." We said: "Why then the addition ' . . . is but to say to it . . . '?" And they replied: "Everything in the Qur'ān has its (ordinary) meaning. Allah speaks in the Arabic idiom: 'The wall spoke, or the palm spoke, and fell down'—but in fact, say nothing"<sup>1</sup>. We said: "Is it this on which you base your judgement?" They said, "Yes." We then said: "If Allah did not speak, as you believe, by what means did He then create all things?" They replied: "By His power." We then said: "Is it a thing?" This they admitted. We asked: "Is His power one of the created things!" They agreed. And so we said: "It looks as if He created by means of a created thing. You have, thereby, contraverted and contradicted the Qur'ān, where Allah said: ' . . . God is the Creator of all things . . . ' Q.13: 17, thus informing us that He Himself creates. Again, ' . . . Is there a creator other than God . . . ?' Q.35: 3—that is, there is no one else,

<sup>1</sup> '*fa-'l Jahmiya*,' which occurs here in the MS looks like a transcriber's error and makes no sense.

while you have asserted that something other than He did the creating.” Far be this teaching of the Jahmiya from Allah, the Exalted’

### XVIII. *Concerning the Hadīth in Which the Qur’ān Calls Allah ‘Lord’*

BĀB: Concerning the assertion made by the Jahmiya that the Qur’ān is created (on the authority) of certain ḥadīth.<sup>1</sup>

(p.19a) They said: “It is related in the ḥadīth that the Qur’ān will appear to its owner in the form of an emaciated youth, asking, ‘Do you know me?’—‘Who are you?’—‘I am the Qur’ān, for whose sake you suffered thirst by day and spent sleepless nights’; and taking him to Allah, the Qur’ān will say, ‘O my Lord!’” It is on such traditions that they base their claim that the Qur’ān is created. But the words mean not that the Qur’ān will appear, but its reward which will address Allah as Lord.

### XIX. *A Refutation that Heaven and Hell will Pass Away*

BĀB: The interpretation by the Jahmiya of Allah’s words: “He is the first and the last,” Q.57: 3.

They spoke the truth when they said that Allah was the first before creation. But went on to say that He would be the last after creation, when there will be nothing left: no earth, no garden, no fire; no reward and no punishment; no throne and no seat,<sup>2</sup> asserting that there would be nothing with Allah who would be the last as He was (the first). Many were thus led astray.

We said: “Allah says that those in the Garden will remain there perpetually, saying: ‘. . . (Gardens) in which lasting pleasure shall be theirs’, Q.9: 21. And again, ‘(Gardens) . . . therein to abide eternally’. And again, ‘Its food and its shades are perpetual’, Q.13: 35; and if Allah said ‘permanent’ it means that it will never be cut off.

<sup>1</sup> There are several versions of the tradition in *Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, pp. 463, 480, 481, 491. The traditions quoted are from the books of tradition by Abū Dāūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā’ī, Ibn Hibbān, Ibn Abū Shaiba and Tabarānī.

<sup>2</sup> The seat or *kursī* is said to be Allah’s footstool. *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila*, p. 28.



And again, 'Nor forth from it shall they be cast for ever', Q.15: 48. And again, 'The life to come is the mansion that abideth'. Q.40: 42. And again, '... Truly the future mansion is life indeed! Would that they knew this!' Q.29: 64. And again, '... Wherein they shall abide for ever', Q.18: 2. And again, 'And as to those whose faces shall have become white, they shall be within the mercy of God: therein shall they abide for ever', Q.3: 103. And again, 'And with abundant fruits, unfailing, unforbidden', Q.56: 31, 32. There are many more such verses in the Qur'ān.

Allah spoke of the dwellers of the Fire and said: '... To die shall never be decreed them, (p. 19b) nor shall aught of its torment be made light to them', Q.35: 33. And again, '... These of my mercy shall despair', Q.29: 22. And again, 'Are these they on whom ... God would not bestow mercy'?<sup>1</sup> Q.7: 47. And again, 'And they shall cry: 'O Malec! Would that thy Lord would make an end of us!' He saith: 'Here must ye remain'! Q.43: 77. And again, '... It is now one whether we be impatient, or endure with patience. We have no escape', Q.14: 25. And again, '(The fire of Gehenna to) abide therein for aye. Of all creatures they are the worst', Q.98: 5. And again, '... So oft as their skins', Q.4: 59. And again, 'So oft as they ... would fain come forth thence, back shall they be turned into it', Q.22: 22. And again, 'It shall verily rise over them like a vault', Q.104: 8. There are many more such verses in the Qur'ān.

As for Heaven and Earth, they will have vanished since their inhabitants will have been moved to the Garden and the Fire. As for the throne, it will not perish nor pass away because it is the vault of the Garden and Allah is upon it. As for Allah's word, 'Everything shall perish except Himself (lit: His face)', Q.28: 88, this means, that Allah had removed all those who were upon it (i.e. the earth).

When the angels, coveting survival, said: 'now have

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal here attributes these words to Allah. See Baiḍāwī on the verse.



the earth's inhabitants perished', Allah sent down a verse directed to heaven and earth (saying), 'You shall perish', And He said, 'Everything'—that is every living thing—'shall perish'—that is shall die—'except His face'—that is, that He is the living One who will not die. The angels were thus certain of death.

We said to the Jahmiya—when they asserted that Allah was in every place, and that there was no place where he was not: "Explain to us Allah's words: '. . . And when God manifested Himself to the mountain He turned it into dust', Q.7: 139. Why did He have to reveal Himself to the mountain if He were in it, as you assert? He would not have revealed Himself to a thing, if He were already in it. But being on the throne, He revealed Himself to something outside of Himself and the mountain saw something (p. 20a) it had never seen before."

We said to Jahm: "Allah has light." He said: "Allah is all light." We said: "Seeing that Allah has said: 'And the earth shall shine with the light of her Lord . . .' Q.39: 69, He has told us that He had light." We said further: "Since you assert that Allah is in every place and is light, why does not His light illumine a dark room as a lighted wick does when introduced into a room?" Their lies against Allah then became evident. Allah's mercy on those who are wise in the things of Allah, who rejecting anything said against the Book and the Sunna, accept the teaching of the learned, which is that of the Emigrants and the Helpers, and turn away from the religion of Jahm and his factions. Allah knows best!

Allah's blessing on Muḥammad and his household. There is no power nor strength save in Allah, the High, the Mighty. Our sufficiency is Allah and He is an excellent protector! O Allah bless Muḥammad and his household. Salute him with many salutations. Allah's pleasure on all the Companions of His Apostle.

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